

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LISBON 02778 01 OF 03 070936Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
TRSE-00 /058 W
-----071013Z 098466 /12

R 061839Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0868
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 LISBON 2778

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PO
SUBJ: LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PERFORMANCE

REF: 76 LISBON 8791 (DTG 221637Z DEC 76)

SUMMARY: THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND THE GOVERNMENT
HAVE COOPERATED WELL OVER THE PAST THREE MONTHS. THE
ASSEMBLY HAS IMPROVED ITS OWN EFFICIENCY BY SHIFTING
MUCH OF ITS WORK TO COMMITTEES. IN MARCH ALONG, THE
ASSEMBLY PASSED 19 LAWS, INCLUDING THE GOVERNMENT'S
ECONOMIC RECOVERY PACKAGE. THE ASSEMBLY HAS YET TO
DISPLAY MUCH INDEPENDENT INITIATIVE, BUT HAS CLAIMED
ITS PLACE AS CRITIC AND CONTRIBUTOR TO GOVERNMENT POLICY.
END SUMMARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LISBON 02778 01 OF 03 070936Z

1. THE WAY IT WAS: PRESIDENT EANES, PRIME MINISTER
SOARES, AND DEPUTIES THEMSELVES COMPLAINED LAST FALL
ABOUT THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC'S STERILE DEBATES AND
LACK OF PRODUCTIVITY (REFTEL). ASSEMBLY DEPUTIES
ASSERTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SOUGHT TO IGNORE THE
LEGISLATIVE BODY. THE ASSEMBLY SPENT MUCH TIME

RATIFYING GOVERNMENT DECREES AT THE REQUEST OF OPPOSITION PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS. THE SOCIALISTS, STICKING TO THEIR POLICY OF NO ALLIANCES, SOUGHT SUPPORT FROM THE PSD, THE CDS, OR THE PCP ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS. THE PS PUSHED HARD TO FORCE GOVERNMENTAL MEASURES THROUGH THE ASSEMBLY WITHOUT CHANGE. THE CULMINATION OF THIS PERIOD OF TENSION BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE AND THE LEGISLATIVE CAME DURING THE LATE-DECEMBER DEBATES ON THE GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC PLAN. THE GOVERNMENT LEARNED IN THAT DEBATE THAT IT SOMETIMES HAD TO BARGAIN TO RECEIVE SUPPORT.

2. WHAT HAS CHANGED: A KEY REASON FOR THE BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ASSEMBLY IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT IN ITS BUDIVT PROPOSALS, AND MORE MARKEDLY IN THE AUSTERITY PROGRAM ANNOUNCED FEB 25, HAS TAKEN FORCEFUL MEASURES TO REVIVE THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND REDUCE SUBSIDIES TO THE PUBLIC SECTOR. THE PSD AND CDS ARE IN BASIC AGREEMENT WITH THESE MEASURES; THE PCP OPPOSES THE PROGRAM AS "PROMOTING CAPITALIST RECOVERY" AND "DAMAGING WORKING CLASS INTERESTS." CONSEQUENTLY, THE GOVERNMENT'S MARGIN FOR NEGOTIATING WITH THE COMMUNISTS HAS BEEN REDUCED. INSTEAD, THE GOVERNMENT MUST DEAL WITH THE PSD AND CDS. IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE A GREATER EFFORT TO AVOID CONFRONTATION WITH THE ASSEMBLY. MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO JORGE CAMPINOS CHAIRS WEEKLY MEETINGS WITH THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS, WHERE ISSUES SUCH AS THE NEED TO SUBMIT MEASURES FOR CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LISBON 02778 01 OF 03 070936Z

ASSEMBLY APPROVAL ARE THRASHED OUT. A MEASURE OF THE IMPROVED COOPERATION BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE AND THE LEGISLATIVE WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S SUBMISSION OF SEVEN IMPORTANT ECONOMIC RECOVERY MEASURES MAR 2 FOR ASSEMBLY APPROVAL. THE ASSEMBLY RESPONDED QUICKLY AND APPROVED THE SEVEN MEASURES WITHIN FOUR WEEKS.

3. ASSEMBLY EFFICIENCY IMPROVED: THE ASSEMBLY HAS TAKEN SEVERAL STEPS TO BECOME MORE EFFICIENT. THE SPECIALIZED COMMITTEES HAVE A STEPPED-UP ROLE; THEY DEBATE AND AMEND GOVERNMENT MEASURES EXTENSIVELY SO THAT PLENARY SESSIONS OF THE ASSEMBLY NEED ONLY RATIFY THE COMMITTEE VOTE. PLENARY SESSIONS HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO THREE DAYS A WEEK IN ORDER TO DEVOTE A FULL DAY IN MID-WEEK TO COMMITTEE MEETINGS. THE COMMITTEES HOLD CLOSED SESSIONS. AWAY FROM THE PUBLIC LIGHT, SESSIONS TEND TO BE BUSINESSLIKE AND NON-POLEMICAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LISBON 02778 02 OF 03 071003Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
TRSE-00 /058 W
-----071014Z 098733 /13

R 061839Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0869
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION NATO
/DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 LISBON 2778

4. COMMITTEE OPERATIONS: EXCEPT FOR THE LABOR AND ECONOMIC COMMITTEES, COMMITTEE MEMBERS FROM ALL PARTIES FREQUENTLY COMBINE TO WORK OUT PRACTICAL COMPROMISES. THE SOCIAL SECURITY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY AGREED FEB 9 TO SEVERAL AMENDMENTS TO THE GOVERNMENT-INTRODUCED LAW ON PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES. THE AMENDED VERSION WAS APPROVED FEB 17 BY THE ASSEMBLY. AN EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEMBER TOLD EMBOFF THAT HIS COMMITTEE HAD REACHED CONSENSUS AGREEMENT ON EVERY BILL EXCEPT EDUCATION CONTROL. ON THIS MEASURE, THE PCP ATTEMPTED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO RETAIN PROVISIONS WHICH HAD FACILITATED COMMUNIST PENETRATION OF THE UNIVERSITIES. ECONOMIC COMMITTEE VOTES ARE MORE CONTENTIOUS AND REFLECT DIFFERING IDEOLOGICAL CONCEPTIONS.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LISBON 02778 02 OF 03 071003Z

THE PS AND PSD APPEAR LIKELY TO REACH AGREEMENT ON KEY MEASURES FOR INDEMNIZATION OF NATIONALIZED PROPERTIES AND FOR DEMARCATION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS. THE PCP AND CDS OPPOSE THE COMPROMISES. LABOR COMMITTEE DEBATES ALSO TEND TO REVOLVE AROUND IDEOLOGICAL QUESTIONS.

5. ASSEMBLY MEASURES ITS WORK: AT THE END OF FEB ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT FERNANDES GAVE THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY WORK:

- 79 SESSIONS (THE FIRST 25 DEVOTED TO ASSEMBLY RULES AND THE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM)
- 96 BILLS PRESENTED (40 BY GOVERNMENT)
- 33 MEASURES DEBATED AND VOTED UPON
- 63 BILLS PENDING
- 5 RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED.

IN MARCH THE ASSEMBLY APPROVED AN ADDITIONAL 19 BILLS; DEBATED THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC AUSTERITY PROGRAM; AND APPROVED MOTIONS ENDORSING PORTUGAL'S APPLICATION FOR EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ENTRY AND CONDEMNING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CHILE AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

6. STILL MANY PROBLEMS: THE ASSEMBLY IS STILL PLAGUED WITH PROBLEMS. FOURTEEN HOURS OF PLENARY SESSIONS PER WEEK WITH DEPUTIES PRESENT UNDER THREAT OF SALARY REDUCTIONS ARE AN UNPRODUCTIVE USE OF THE DEPUTIES' TIME. THE THREE TO SIX HOURS PER WEEK DEVOTED TO GENERAL DEBATE ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS HAVE WITNESSED FRUITLESS IDEOLOGICAL POLEMICS AMONG THE PARTIES AND MANY RAMBLING DISCOURSES INTENDED TO CONVINCE THE HOME FOLKS OF THE DEPUTY'S INTEREST IN LOCAL ISSUES. PLENARY SESSIONS ARE NONETHELESS, MORE EFFICIENT THAN IN THE PAST DESPITE THE INABILITY OF MANY DEPUTIES TO COPE WITH THE RIGIDITIES OF PORTUGUESE PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE. WHILE COMMITTEES FUNCTION MORE EFFICIENTLY, THEY SUFFER FROM A LACK OF STAFF. DEPUTIES MUST DO THEIR

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LISBON 02778 02 OF 03 071003Z

OWN RESEARCH, PREPARE THEIR OWN SPEECHES, AND DRAFT THEIR OWN LAWS. THE ELEVEN SPECIALIZED COMMITTEES SPREAD PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS THIN. MOST PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS HAVE CONCENTRATED THEIR HEAVY HITTERS IN THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, BUT EVEN THERE PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS ARE HARD PRESSED TO FIND GOOD REPRESENTATIVES FOR ALL THE SUB-COMMITTEES.

7. NEW ORGANIC LAW: THE ASSEMBLY APPROVED ON FEB 25 A REORGANIZATION WHICH SHOULD HELP TO RESOLVE SOME OF THE ASSEMBLY'S DIFFICULTIES. THE LAW, PASSED WITH THE SUPPORT OF ALL PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS, PROVIDES FOR

THE FOLLOWING:

- ADDITIONAL FACILITIES: THE ASSEMBLY MAY RENT OR ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL BUILDINGS TO SOLVE ITS SEVERE SPACE PROBLEM AND PROVIDE WORKING FACILITIES FOR ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES.
- STAFF: THE ASSEMBLY UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE ASSEMBLY OFFICERS MAY HIRE SUFFICIENT STAFF TO PROVIDE PARLIAMENTARY AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT.
- FINANCIAL AUTONOMY: THE ASSEMBLY HAS ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL AUTONOMY.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LISBON 02778 03 OF 03 071002Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
TRSE-00 /058 W

-----071014Z 098696 /13

R 061839Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0870
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 LISBON 2778

- SUPPORT FOR PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS: 3-9 ADDITIONAL STAFF ASSISTANTS ARE PROVIDED FOR EACH PARLIAMENTARY GROUP DEPENDING ON ITS SIZE.
- STUDY GROUPS: ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES MAY USE CENTRALIZED ASSEMBLY STAFF OR OUTSIDE CONTRACT EMPLOYEES TO PERFORM RESEARCH AND SPECIAL STUDIES.
- SUPPORT FOR PARTIES: POLITICAL PARTIES REPRESENTED IN THE ASSEMBLY WILL RECEIVE AN ANNUAL SUBSIDY (SEPAIR).

8. COMMENT: THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY STARTED SLOWLY,

WITH NO EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENTARY TRADITION. THE
CONSTITUTION LIMITS THE AUTHORITY OF THE LEGISLATIVE
BRANCH, AND THE ASSEMBLY HAS DEMONSTRATED LITTLE
INDEPENDENT INITIATIVE. NEVERTHELESS, RAPID IMPROVEMENT
IN THE ASSEMBLY'S PERFORMANCE WAS NECESSARY TO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LISBON 02778 03 OF 03 071002Z

DEMONSTRATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.
ENCOURAGING, IF MODERATE, IMPROVEMENT HAS TAKEN PLACE
AND THE ASSEMBLY HAS BEGUN TO ASSERT ITS ROLE AS
CRITIC AND CONTRIBUTOR TO GOVERNMENT POLICY.
CARLUCCI

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REFORM, POLICIES, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LISBON02778
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770121-0620
Format: TEL
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770483/aaaactzk.tel
Line Count: 294
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e11f54a9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 LISBON 8791
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2883702
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PERFORMANCE
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e11f54a9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009